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THE INDIVIDUAL vs the MASS SOCIETY

Critical Issues and Decisions, Series III

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

Leon Keyserling

Harold Taylor

Peter H. Odegard

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Edited by Eleanor A. Ferris

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PREFACE

The four lectures presented in this publication were delivered during the third Critical Issues and Decisions seminar series conducted by the Graduate School of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Forty Federal officials took part in the seminars which were conducted by leading scholars drawn from the world of education, politics, and economics. A unique feature of this series was their broadcasting over closed circuit television to nine locations in government buildings in the Washington metropolitan area. In this way, they were made available to a much wider audience than was previously possible. The telecasts were made through facilities of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center TV Network.

The telecasts consisted of the lectures presented herein and an hour of discussion between the lecturer and the seminar participants.

The Critical Issues and Decisions seminars, now in their third year, are designed to help Federal officials in dealing with the increasingly complex problems they meet in their work, to broaden their outlook beyond the specialized areas to which they are normally confined, and to help them become more effective administrators through added experience and education.

In addition to the televised lectures and discussions, the seminar series included selected readings on related topics and regularly scheduled group discussions throughout the seven-week course.

In addition to the scholars whose lectures are presented here, Donald Michael, former Director, Peace Research Institute, led a seminar discussion on "Work and Technology," but presented no formal lecture.

JOHN B. HOLDEN
Director, Graduate School

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

By its nature a group activity, the Critical Issues and Decisions Program involved team effort. Above all we are indebted to the visiting scholars whose insights and inspiration are reflected in this publication. Jerold N. Willmore of the Graduate School staff was the overall coordinator of the program. The original and continuing planning committee consists of Theodore Taylor, Smithsonian Institution; Charles E. Kellogg, Foster E. Mohrhardt, and Loyd M. LaMois, U. S. Department of Agriculture; Chester L. Neudling, U. S. Office of Education; John L. Nolan, Library of Congress. This group helped plan the program and recommended the visiting scholars. For the unselfish contributions of their time and guidance the Graduate School is especially indebted.

All books published by the Graduate School are reviewed by the Graduate School's Committee on Publications. This committee, made up of information specialists and editors, renders invaluable service and advice in each phase of production. The members are Theodora E. Carlson, U. S. Office of Education; Jerome H. Perlmutter, Department of State; Forest J. Hall, Robert T. Hall, Harry P. Mileham, D. Harper Simms, and James McCormick (Chairman), U. S. Department of Agriculture; Robert P. Willing, Department of the Interior. Vera E. Jensen, of the Graduate School staff, works with this committee and is responsible for the production and sale of publications.

The lectures in this publication were transcribed from tape recordings and, through consultation with the lecturers, were edited by Eleanor A. Ferris of the Agricultural Marketing Service. The manuscript was transcribed and typed by Arlene Raines and Bernice R. Thayer. William P. Everard was responsible for copy editing and proofreading.

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THE INDIVIDUAL *vs* THE MASS SOCIETY

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

Historian

The topic I have been asked to discuss sums up the basic political and social struggle of this century. For, since the end of the First World War, our planet has been shaken by a continuing conflict, at times quiet and grim, at times flaring into violence, between the open society and the closed society—between those who see the destiny of man as undetermined and unfinished and those who see it as irrevocably settled by inexorable laws of history. My effort to-day will be to consider some of the sources of this conflict, to trace its manifestations in our own day, and to hazard some guesses about its eventual outcome.

The idea of the open society, in its modern form, was born in the 18th century. A group of men in Britain, France, and the North American colonies, influenced by classical ideas of the dignity of the human personality and by Christian ideas of the integrity of the human soul, exhilarated by the release of energy set off by the decay of feudalism, began to evolve new political conceptions. No one caught the new spirit better than Thomas Jefferson when in the American Declaration of Independence he proclaimed man's inalienable rights to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Jefferson's phrase implied a society founded on the dignity and the integrity of the individual and devoted to the assurance to every individual of a decent chance for a decent life. The implications of this conception were

Former assistant to President Kennedy.

revolutionary, and they have not yet been fully realized, even in Jefferson's own land. But they stated with brilliant brevity the generous ideals of what has come to be known as the open society.

Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence less than two centuries ago. In subsequent years, the open society, in one form or another, began to take root in western Europe, in North America, and later, in even more limited forms, in central and eastern Europe and in Central and South America. Yet, after a century or so of experimentation with various forms of the open society, the modern world began to see a reaction against it, a counterrevolution, a new social impulse which rejected individual freedom and individual choice and offered instead a fixed and rigid vision of the future.

This counterrevolution was something new in human experience. Arbitrary rule, dictatorship, tyranny—all these were, of course, as old as history itself. But the closed society of modern times had unique characteristics—characteristics suggested by the word which most clearly defines its essence, the word “totalitarianism.” Classical forms of dictatorship and tyranny might seek to suppress all active and overt forms of doubt and dissent; but they lacked the technical means, if not the desire and the will, to annihilate the existing structure of society and to violate the inner life of its members. Modern science and communications gave totalitarianism the means to achieve total control; a universalist ideology gave them the desire; a social fanaticism gave them the will. As a result, modern totalitarianism merged society with the state, permitted no organizations outside the state, no opinions beyond the state, no thoughts against the state. Or, at least, this was—and is—the totalitarian theory. And it was in this spirit that modern totalitarianism launched its assault against the open society.

It is important for us to understand why, if the open so-

ciety had achieved a foothold in so much of the western world, totalitarianism was able to rise in revolt against it, why the essential doctrines of totalitarianism grew in the bosom of open societies, and why these doctrines could enlist the support of the members of open societies. To understand this, one must look at problems both of social organization and of individual psychology.

So far as social organization is concerned, the open society substituted what legal historians have called a society of contract for a society of status. In a society of status, people, for better or for worse, knew their place. Whether that place was high or low, it existed. Serfs owed obligations to barons, and barons to serfs. Every person had his niche. Everyone belonged somewhere. Such a society provided a certain minimal security, a certain primitive consolation. After a time, it is true, the constraints of the society of status became intolerable; and, under the pressure of scientific and technological change, men shattered the old system and sought liberty for their own ideas and their own enterprise. Still, they paid a price for the new freedom.

The new society—the society of contract—was splendid for the strong, the confident, the adventurous, the resourceful. Such men exulted in the glittering vistas of opportunity opening up before them. But for the weak and defenseless it was a baffling and inhuman order, in which no one had his appointed place or secure status. The new economic philosophy of *laissez-faire* appeared a philosophy of everyone shifting for himself and the devil taking the hindmost. In times of economic expansion, life could still be tolerable for most people. But in times of economic contraction, when people through no fault of their own could not find work or feed their children or keep a roof over their heads, the open society in the age of *laissez-faire* became intolerable. Such people were beguiled by the seductions of totalitarianism. For totalitarianism promised them not only jobs and

economic security. It promised them comradeship in a massed army consecrated to a cause; it promised them an alliance with the inevitabilities of history; it promised to charge empty lives with meaning and to give them a faith to live by, and to die for. Against this glowing hope, the open society, governed as it still largely was by the callous injunctions of *laissez-faire*, seemed cold and cruel.

The failure of social organization reinforced a deeper weakness in the human will itself. For freedom meant the responsibility for choice; choice generates anxiety; and anxiety can lead to a panic flight from freedom. No one has analyzed man's innate fear of freedom more profoundly than Dostoevsky in his fable of the Grand Inquisitor. The process which the psychiatrist Erich Fromm has called the "escape from freedom" made people all the more vulnerable to the appeals of totalitarianism. Traditional democratic theory, as Reinhold Niebuhr has observed, failed to take account of the darker strains in human nature; and, when history refuted democratic optimism there were those who supposed that it had refuted democracy itself.

Thus far I have used 'totalitarianism' as a generic term. Of course our century has seen two waves of the totalitarian assault against open society: the communist wave, and the fascist wave. Communism and fascism have many, and significant, differences. They also have some, and significant, similarities. In particular, they have in common the conception of society as founded on a single, absolute, infallible truth. Communists had one version of this single truth, fascists another, but both assumed that the single truth existed, that it had been revealed to one or more appointed prophets, that it had been codified in a dogmatic ideology, that it was expressed in the movement of history, and that its execution was confided to a single infallible political party headed by a single infallible leader. In this spirit of

ideological absolutism, each totalitarian faith conducted its own campaign against the open society.

In so doing, they engaged the open society on the central point of difference. For the open society had by definition no single truth, no absolute dogma, no all-encompassing ideology; it had only its faith in the dignity and integrity of the individual, and its conviction that the test of truth lay in the clash of ideas. Against totalitarianism, the open society offered pluralism; against doctrine, experiment; against decree, debate; against dogmatism, pragmatism. William James in drawing his famous distinction between the "tender-minded" and the "tough-minded," the rationalist and the empiricist, formulated a salient difference between the closed and the open worlds. The "tender-minded" sees the world as one; the "tough-minded" as many; the first believes that reality is to be deduced from general principles, the second that it is to be built up from facts and experience.

Now even if the totalitarian states had no other motives for aggression, they could not have endured a world consecrated in any part to pragmatism and pluralism. The totalitarian faith is universalist; the totalitarian theory of history requires that *all* societies go along predestined roads through predestined stages to the single predestined conclusion. An exception becomes a mortal threat to the system. As Peter Wiles has said,

The proverb is most misleading that it takes two to make a quarrel. If one side is sufficiently blinded by ideology, the mere existence of another side suffices.

And so the contest was inevitably joined—first by the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917; then by the rise of Mussolini and Hitler, and their war against the open society in 1939;

and finally by the communist Cold War against the open society, which has prevailed more or less since 1945.

At its most extreme, the contest has taken the form of outright military aggression. The internal dynamics of fascism, indeed, made military aggression a virtual necessity. Hitler, as people said in the thirties, was a man on a bicycle: he could not pause without falling. The internal dynamics of communism seem able to sustain a more long-term and subtle strategy. If communism lacks, as it does lack, the military power to strike for victory in war, its theory of history assures its adherents that victory is in any case certain—that the open society will inevitably perish from its own internal contradictions—that the capitalists will be their own gravediggers and, if not buried by others, will bury themselves.

This communist confidence in the inevitable triumph of the closed society over the open society is based fundamentally on the conviction that the open society cannot handle the hard problems of modern life. Marx, in arguing that the open society contained the seeds of its own destruction, pointed to two inner tendencies which, he said, would infallibly bring about its downfall. One of these inexorable tendencies was to be the increasing gap between the rich and the poor. The other was to be the increasing frequency and severity of economic crisis. Together these tendencies would carry society to the point of revolutionary “ripeness” when the proletariat would rise in its wrath, dispossesses its masters, and establish a classless society. Marx saw no way of denying this process, because the capitalist state in his view—and under the *laissez-faire* ideology—could never be anything but the executive committee of the capitalist class.

This turned out to be his fatal error. Marx’s fundamental fallacy lay in supposing that those who lived in the open society were as totally under the spell of ideology as those who believed in the closed society. But the open society abhors

ideology as nature abhors a vacuum; and *laissez-faire*, far from being a fanatical and all-inclusive faith, was simply a set of propositions which some men held at some times and in some places. In practice, the open society always subordinates doctrines to experience. And as a consequence, the capitalist state, far from being the servile tool of the possessing class, became the means by which other groups in society redressed the balance of social power against those whom Alexander Hamilton called the "rich and well-born." This process began in the United States fifteen years before the *Communist Manifesto* during the Presidency of Andrew Jackson. Indeed, the Jacksonian historian and politician George Bancroft put the issue with precision a dozen years before Marx and Engels sat down in Brussels to write their appeal for world revolution. "The feud between the capitalist and laborer, the house of Have and the house of Want," Bancroft wrote, "is as old as social union, and can never be entirely quieted; but he who will act with moderation, prefer fact to theory, and remembers that every thing in this world is relative and not absolute, will see that the violence of the contest may be stilled."

The rise of the affirmative democratic state accomplished two things in particular. It brought about a relative redistribution of wealth which defeated Marx's prediction of the immiseration of the poor; and it brought about a relative economic stabilization which defeated Marx's prediction of ever-worsening economic crisis. What the progressive democratic forces did, in short, was to use the state to force capitalism to do what both the classical capitalists and the classical Marxists declared was impossible: to control the business cycle and to reapportion income in favor of those whom Jackson called the "humble members of society."

Theodore Roosevelt well stated the strategy of the open society when he wrote, "The more we condemn unadulterated Marxian Socialism, the stouter should be our insistence

on thoroughgoing social reforms." This involved a two-front war. The champions of the affirmative state, in their determination to avert Marxist revolution, had to fight conservative *laissez-faire* at every step along the way. Nonetheless, they persevered, and they won. The 20th century in America and Great Britain saw the rejection of *laissez-faire*, the subjugation of the business cycle, the drowning of revolution in a torrent of consumer goods, and the steady movement toward the "affluent society." The revolutionary fires within capitalism, lit by industrial exploitation in the 19th century, were put out in the 20th by the triumphs of industry—and by the progressive political leaders, by Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt, by Lloyd George and the young Churchill and Beveridge and Attlee. Such men ignored the ideologists, the apostles of either/or, and gave the open society new instruments with which to deal with the challenges of industrialism and growth.

And so the open society began to correct those failures of compassion and brotherhood which in earlier years had triggered the movement toward the closed society. The processes of economic competition were subjected to social control. Workers were no longer industrial cannon fodder. Standards were set for the necessities of life and livelihood—wages, hours, working conditions—below which no citizen was allowed to fall. Provisions were made for security against unemployment and for old age. The industrial order was humanized. All this gave a new face to freedom. Instead of meaning callousness and inhumanity, it began to mean opportunity and hope. Marx's prophecy about the collapse of the open society has been based on the assumption that the order of *laissez-faire* was unalterable. But the progress of democratic reform undermined Marx's assumption and refuted his prophecy.

At the same time, it became increasingly evident that the

promises of the closed society were false. A closed society, because it forbids freedom of movement and freedom of reporting and freedom of discussion, can suppress the truth about itself for a long time. But, in the end, the flood of self-serving propaganda begins to lose its force, and the truth is bound to come out. Instead of economic security, the closed society produced scarcity and forced labor and mass starvation. Instead of brotherhood, it produced a class rule more severe and autocratic than anything ever known in the open society. Instead of providing a faith to live by and to die for, it produced an iron system of total control for the benefit of a small elite. It would be wrong to deny the genuine achievements of the totalitarian system in the way of construction and modernization. But the fact that the other day, after years of boasting about communist production and capitalist stringency, the Soviet Union moved to buy American wheat offers the Russian people themselves a powerful demonstration of the superiority of the open system.

A quarter of a century ago, writers contemplating the confrontation between the open society and the closed society, could speak of totalitarianism as "the wave of the future." The free system seemed spent, hopeless, at the end of its tether. The closed system seemed invincible in its massed power and purpose. When communism succeeded fascism as the basic threat, the totalitarian challenge seemed for a season even more remorseless and unconquerable. But few people today put much stock in the myth of the inevitability of communist victory. For the lesson of history is plain: it is the closed society, and not the open society, which contains the seeds of its own destruction. It is the closed society, and not the open society, which is most likely to perish of its own internal contradictions. It is the commissars rather than the capitalists who are going to be their own most successful gravediggers.

The rock on which the closed society must founder is the stubborn and irreducible pluralism of the world. The commitment of the closed society is to universalism and to absolutism. The closed society gambled on the belief that the processes of social and economic development would produce a monolithic world—a world in which all peoples and all societies would have the same economic system, the same political creed, the same philosophical faith. But the open society derives its power from the conviction that the world is diverse and spacious, and that for the indefinite future it will have room for a great variety of economic systems, political creeds and philosophic faiths.

If anything is clear today, it is that the proponents of the open society are right—that the movement of history is toward a pluralistic world, not toward a monolithic world—that the processes of development are carrying the planet, not toward Marx, but away from him. The closed society may perhaps come to seem an historical aberration, endowed for a moment with exceptional intensity and drive, but incapable of sustaining its *mystique* over a long period. It is the open society which is in the grain of history, and, so long as the leaders of the open society do not repeat their errors of the past, so long as they remember their obligation to seek life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for *all* men, regardless of their race and color, their economic circumstance, or their social origin, so long as they labor unceasingly to enlarge freedom, opportunity, and justice, there is every reason to suppose that it is the open, and not the closed society, which will define the world of the future.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PRODUCTIVITY

Leon Keyserling

Economist

The subject of Economic Growth and Productivity is a very important one, because our economic lives are a very important manifestation of our total performance as a nation.

Nature and Content of Economic Growth

There are a number of ways of measuring economic growth. But perhaps the most general and most useful is to measure it by the annual increase in our total production of goods and services, which we call the gross national product, expressing this g.n.p. in dollars of uniform purchasing power, thus adjusting for price change.

Our potential for economic growth is determined by two main factors: First, by growth in the civilian labor force, which means everybody gainfully employed therein; and second, by the growth in productivity, which is the growth in the output of a person when fully employed during an hour, this growth being affected by improving labor skills, technology, machines, and management. If the labor force grows by three percent and productivity grows by three percent, and they are both fully used, the economic growth rate, or growth in g.n.p., is roughly six percent.

There is nothing mechanistic or automatic in the growth of the labor force and productivity. While in one sense the growth of the labor force and productivity determine the

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potential for economic growth, it is also true that the actual rate of economic growth helps to determine the growth of the labor force and productivity. To take a striking example, during World War II, when we realized that we needed a very high rate of economic growth, the policies adopted called forth the needed labor force and productivity. More applicable to the current situation, we've actually had an unusually low growth in the labor force, much lower than would be determined by the natural growth of the population. This is because, when job opportunity is scarce, many people do not enter the "labor force," the definition of the labor force being the people actually looking for work. If people find month after month that they can't get jobs, they stop looking actively for work, and then they are no longer counted as being in the labor force and consequently no longer counted as unemployed. I call this concealed unemployment, and use it in my count of the true level of unemployment.

Productivity is also affected by the actual economic growth rate. When plants and manpower are fully used, there is more efficient utilization than when large amounts of plant and manpower are idle. Thus, when the economy is very slack, there is a suppression of the actual growth rate in actual productivity. But the technology and automation which create the potential productivity growth rate are moving forward at a higher rate nonetheless. This might be called temporarily concealed productivity growth.

Both concealed unemployment and concealed productivity growth have been very operative in the American economy during the past ten years or so. Neglecting this, many economists have grossly underestimated how much we would need to grow to restore full employment and full production, because fuller use of resources would actualize the concealed growth in the labor force and in productivity. This is also one of the reasons, among many, why policies

to restore full employment and full production have been so seriously deficient—because they have been based upon the actual growth in the labor force and in productivity instead of upon the true potentials.

When economic activity starts moving substantially upward and plants become more active and more people are employed, these concealed resources burst forth, the labor force begins to grow faster, and productivity begins to grow faster, so that the increase in economic growth does not result in as much reduction of unemployment as had been anticipated. That's what has been happening specifically during the past two years. The economic growth, even though insufficient, has called forth some of the latent or concealed labor force and the latent or repressed productivity potential. But unemployment has not been reduced significantly.

The Low Economic Growth Rate and Its Consequences

The actual facts are that during the last ten years our economic growth rate annually, as I have defined it, has averaged about 2.8 percent, when, under the conditions of the new technology and automation and the true demographic trends in the labor force, the average annual economic growth rate should have been well above 4 percent, or even higher. And this difference means that, over these ten years, we have had about 27½ million unnecessary man-years of unemployment, or an average during the ten years of more than 2½ million unemployed above the level of unemployment that would have been consistent with maximum employment. We have also forfeited about 450 billion dollars in total national production, or g.n.p., which has impacted upon every sector of our national life.

Correspondingly, we have had a practical arrestment of the reduction of poverty in the United States, so that actually we have about as many poor people now by any fair

standard as we had ten years ago—about a fifth of the nation. While there has been some improvement of incomes in general, even under the low rate of economic growth, not only have this fifth of the population not shared in the rate of progress, but actually they haven't had any substantial progress. In other words, their incomes in the main have been frozen in real terms at the levels that they were ten years ago.

So one very important consequence of the low rate of economic growth is a cessation of any large rise in the living standard of about a fifth of the population. A second consequence is that this happens also, though to a somewhat lesser degree, to another fifth of the population who live in what I call deprivation; that is, above the poverty level, but below the level that would be defined as a moderately adequate level of living in the American context.

Still another consequence is that the low rate of economic growth has impacted very severely upon our public services at all levels, except national defense which has moved forward at whatever rate those best competent to judge decided, and this exception probably applies also to moon exploration. But this is not the case with respect to educational services, health services, highways, transportation, educational facilities, and other domestic public programs. They have been greatly impoverished by the low rate of economic growth, particularly because as a nation we are dedicated to the idea that there should be some close relationship between the amount of money raised by taxation and the amount that we spend through public outlays. And the 450-billion-dollar deficiency in total national production during the past ten years has meant a deficiency of about 45–50 billion dollars in public revenues at actual levels of taxation.

The nature of the relationship between tax revenues and public outlays is very clearly illustrated by the fact that the

current proposal to reduce taxes by more than 11 billion dollars, in order to stimulate the economy, is accompanied as a *quid pro quo* by a promise not to lift our domestic public outlays over the next few years. This actually means a serious reduction in per capita public services as our population increases.

The Central Problem of Economic Equilibrium

The reason for the low rate of economic growth can be described fairly simply—it is because the use of our economic resources has not been kept in equilibrium. And the main requirement for this equilibrium is the relationship between the growth in our ability to produce and the growth in demand for the ultimate products which are turned out by the factories and by the farms and by the services which represent the productive process.

This ultimate demand is of two kinds: The private demand represented by the private incomes and spending of about 190 million Americans, and the public demand represented by the outlays of governments at all levels. These two kinds of demand, private consumption and public investment (really public consumption), have to add up to the growth in our productive powers if these powers are to be fully utilized. And when we have, as we have had during the past ten years, a chronically rising level of unused productive powers, not only represented by unemployment but also represented by idle plant, it is manifest that ultimate demand has not kept up with our productive powers.

The True Level of Unemployment

The size of these unused resources may be measured in another way. We hear that we have almost 6 percent unemployment. We really have more than 9 percent, because the 6 percent figure does not take into account the full-time equivalent of part-time unemployment. Nor does this 6 percent figure include the concealed unemployment which

results from the low growth in the labor force due to the reasons I have stated. Measured in terms of plant, we have about 15 to 18 percent of our plant not utilized, when we ought to have a utilization rate of about 92 percent, which would mean 8 percent of the plant not utilized.

The Economic Significance of Income Distribution

The reason for the lack of equilibrium, the reason for the unused resources, is basically a matter of income distribution. Income distribution is really the most fundamental problem in economics, at least in an economy as highly developed as the U.S. economy. I am not a socialist and I don't believe in equal income distribution, but I do believe in the need for an income distribution which results in economic equilibrium and in full use of our productive resources. And this we have not had in recent years.

In other words, every time we have had an economic upturn—and we have had three economic upturns since 1953—the investment in plant and equipment which increased our productive powers has been fed by a level of profits, by a level of retained earnings, by a level of credit availability, and by a level of other funds available for investment, so high relative to the increase in ultimate demand that the investment in plant and equipment has grown from 3 to 6 times as fast as the increase in ultimate demand during each of these periods of economic upturn. In consequence, there have periodically been sharp cutbacks in investment—not because of absence of profits, not because of absence of funds, but because business just can't go on indefinitely expanding its productive capabilities when it is confronted by larger and larger unused plant capacities.

In sharp contrast, the deficiency in private consumption has not been caused by an unwillingness of families to spend a large enough portion of their incomes, but rather by a distributive process which does not provide them with

enough total income to maintain a full employment level of demand. This is aggravated by the severe maldistribution of income. People at the top save a large part of their incomes for investment. But more than half of the American population actually dis-saves each year. This lower income half of the population spends more each year than it earns—that is, more than they earn after taxes. They are net borrowers.

Thus, the unsatisfactory income distribution results periodically in excessive saving available for investment. But this saving can't all be absorbed by investment, because of the overcapacity, and this is the whole heart of the matter. It therefore follows that, if we were dedicated effectively to restoring reasonably full employment and production we would be using our national economic policies to bring about a better economic equilibrium including improved income distribution. This same course would obviously help to reduce poverty, and be beneficial on social or equitable grounds.

Deficiencies in Current National Economic Policies

We are not doing this. We are still pursuing a very tight money policy. We are still pushing interest rates upward. The proposed tax reduction is perhaps the most powerfully regressive tax program that has been presented to the Congress during my 30 years in Washington. Just to give you one simple example, it would increase the disposable income of the 3,000-dollar family by over 2 percent, and it would increase the disposable income of the 200,000-dollar family by 16 percent. To take another example, if we look at the distribution of the tax reduction between stimuli to investment and stimuli to consumption, and if we take the 11-billion-dollar proposed tax reduction and add to it the 2-billion-dollar tax concession in 1962, the two together provide about 6.7 billion dollars to stimulate investment

(including the corporate tax cuts and that proportion of the personal tax cuts for high income people which they would save and seek to invest) and about 6.4 billion dollars to stimulate consumption. The amount provided to stimulate investment will be very considerably wasted, because, as I have said, profits now are higher than ever before, and so are profit margins on sales and so are retained earnings, and so is cash flow.

The corporations and individual investors don't need more funds—they need more markets. And the amount provided to stimulate markets through the personal tax cuts *in toto* are also in part wasted, because too large a part of these cuts go to the very high income people who will save part of it, or if they spend it will spend it for another trip overseas which will increase our gold and balance of payments problem.

There are many other policies, besides fiscal policy and monetary policy, that have to do with getting the economy on the move again. And all of these policies really relate to supplementary methods of expanding the income levels and purchasing power of the American people, with great accent upon the people in the lower half of the income structure who are the greatest underdeveloped market in the world for U.S. products. I am for a larger program of foreign aid, too, but the greatest underdeveloped market for the products of our technology and automation is right here in the United States.

Now just to identify a few of the programs which should be utilized: First of all, we have 18 million or more people in the United States who are 65 years old and over, and their incomes in the main are miserable. More than half of these people who are heads of families have incomes of less than \$3,000 a year from all sources, not just from their social security payments. Almost half of the people living alone, who are 65 and over, have incomes of less than

\$1,000 a year from all sources. So one of the biggest things that we ought to do to expand consumption is to about double, during the next five years, the average size of the social security payments to the old. This, by adding to the markets for goods, would be beneficial to the whole population, and not just to those 65 and over.

We ought also to have a different attitude toward wage policy. The Government, during the past ten years, has been engaged in an intensive campaign to hold back the rate of wage increases, on the ground that if wages increase faster than productivity this would be inflationary. This is a very valid general proposition; I am entirely for it when it is really applicable. The only trouble is that, during the last 5 years in most of our mass production industries, the rate of wage increases has fallen very severely behind the rate of productivity increase. This is true even of the railroads, where we hear so much about "featherbedding" and "overpay." Indeed, the biggest gap in the economy from the viewpoint of consumption, quantitatively, is the gap between the trends in wages and the trends in productivity in the industries where the wages are paid. This is true because private consumption makes up about two-thirds of our g.n.p., and the earnings which are classified as wages and salaries make up about two-thirds of all consumption.

The Need for More Planning

So on all scores, we don't have our current national economic policies at all well adjusted to the needs of the country. A main reason why this is so, is that we do not have an adequate degree of planning in our national economic policies. I am not talking about the planning of the whole economy, which I am just as much against as the next man. I am talking about the planning of the things which the Government does in any event. In other words, nobody contests that the Government should have a tax policy, a

money policy, a social security policy, a housing policy. But except in wartime, there is no sufficient planning of these programs in terms of, first, defining the quantitative goals for the economy, and second, measuring the proper role of each of these programs with reference to the part that they need to play in attainment of the goals. Consistency, integration, and adequacy are all lacking.

This has, by now, reached the point where there is actual failure to observe the explicit terms of the Employment Act of 1946. The Employment Act of 1946 says, specifically, that the Government shall establish, through the *Economic Reports* of the President, needed levels of employment, production, and purchasing power, and then shall evaluate each relevant Government program, past, current, and prospective, in terms of what contribution it can and should make to these objectives. This method of approach would provide a quantitative guideline to public policies. This has nothing to do with government control of prices and wages, or with allocation of materials, which I am against in relative peacetime. It has nothing to do with control of private industry by Government. It has to do with control by the Government of its own operations, in other words, the true budgeting of our national economic policies. This we do not have now in any sufficiently purposeful degree.

“Political” Issues

It is said that, because of the “political” situation, it is not feasible for the Administration to seek more than the kind of tax program which was originally submitted to the Congress. There are always “political” factors in a democracy, and should be. But I think that we need also, under our system, a screwing to the sticking point of the initiative of the Chief Executive, who under the American system has become the prime initiator of economic policies. Whenever this initiation is molded reasonably well, we have a better

chance to get what the people and the Nation need, even though we must still let the cards fall where they may as to what the Congress does with the programs proposed by the President.

I realize that we live in a political economy, but I also realize the difference between political necessity and political legerdemain, and the difference between political responsibility and political abnegation. And we don't live in times, either domestically or internationally, where we can afford to let political abnegation, as distinguished from political responsibility, infuse the handling of our national economic policies.



DEMOCRACY AND THE MASSES

Harold Taylor

Educator

I would like to say something about what a democracy is and what it should not be confused with. References are often made these days to mass culture and its relation to the individual in it, and the confusion is often made that a democracy is a mass culture. The confusion is between the existence of democracy as a political instrument to achieve certain values in life and the fact that we are in a society which is large and which has overgrown itself and its own institutions. This had made what can be defined as a mass culture, within which we then create our own forms of life and our own values. But a mass culture is not necessarily democratic, nor need a democracy be a mass culture. Ortega in his "Revolt of the Masses" defined contemporary man as mass man with no character or individuality of his own and complained that thousands and thousands of unthinking people were cluttering up the streets and the beaches. In some ways this clarified and in other ways confused the relationship of mass culture to democracy.

The confusion comes from assuming that anything appreciated by the masses is vulgar, which then leads to the further assumption that mass societies corrupt aesthetic and intellectual values. The same kind of confusion produces the same kind of thinking about education—it is ruined if too many people get into it. Whatever was once a private matter for a few people and which becomes a public matter for thousands is thought to be debased in the process.

The point is not to stay with Ortega's complaint about too many people on the beaches, but to recognize the fact that without an audience which has learned to enjoy art, without an educated public which understands science and politics, there is no true support for the arts, for education, or for the sciences. Bad art and the dazzle of technology are what masses of people are likely to respond to if they have no immediate access to the arts and sciences for themselves, and if there is nothing in their education or their growing-up that can quicken an awareness to the aesthetic content in all experience.

This is one of the main troubles with mass education in America; 43 million people from the age of 6 to 22 are in it, 1 out of every 4 people in the country. From the outside it looks like a gigantic apparatus for systematically preparing students to be mass consumers of other peoples' ideas and manufactured products.

What we must call for is to spend more of our time, energy, and money on developing poets, composers, dancers, sculptors, scientists, painters, writers, and less on generals, admirals, weapons experts, space-riders, and baseball players. There is no reason why a mass society cannot create a beautiful educational system. Innate ignorance is a quality shared by the entire human race; it is not a peculiarity of the American high school student. It is precisely because people are born ignorant that schools and colleges are needed and that teachers must be educated far beyond the present stage of the national intellect.

A democracy can and will develop citizens capable of great taste and great art, provided teachers who are themselves inducted fully into the world of the artist and the scientist take pains and take thought to induct the others. A mass educational system is on its way to creating a lively culture when it honors its artists and intellectuals and takes joy in the quality of life. But first its educators must stop thinking of people in the mass as instruments for a national policy.

If one thinks of democracy as the means through which we manage to govern ourselves, and then we think of democratic values as those which rest on that necessity of governing ourselves fairly, by taking account of everyone's views and interests within the given society, it is clear that this is not what Ortega and the critics of mass culture have in mind. When the critics talk, they imply that there is something wrong with the masses simply because there are so many of them. This tendency has created a good deal of misunderstanding about what it means to have a democratic educational system. In current educational debates and in the current debates about social change and its relation to politics, the misunderstanding can be seen in the fact that people assume there is just one kind of education which everyone should have. If the person who is put into that educational system is unable to cope with it, then it is assumed he does not deserve full citizenship in the democracy. He therefore becomes part of the masses. He should be shuffled off to something vocational or, as things are now going, into some unautomated vocation where he can use his hands or whatever skills he has developed. But he is screened out of the society, in a sense, by the fact that he cannot do the academic subjects of the educational system at an early enough age.

I also find a confusion about the cultural values of democracy in the present tendency among writers and educators and social critics to write as members of committees. One of the phenomena of the 1950's has been a tendency to produce reports on everything. If a national problem exists, such problems as where the country is going or even where mankind is going, it has been customary in the past for persons to think and write about the problem as philosophers or social critics. It has now become normal procedure to form committees. These produce something which is mistaken for a democratic means of reforming the culture by reports written in committee prose. This means usually a report on

everyone's ideas about everything, which is another way of saying no one's idea about anything. Such reports seem to have been written by no one. They contain language which emerges with no style, with no flavor, with no individuality, and the form of democracy has been observed while its content has been lost.

In a number of ways, American education and American culture have fallen into a crisis deeper than is commonly known. It is a crisis hidden by a moral and intellectual lethargy. The lethargy is hidden from public view by the more overt manifestations of the culture which we have seen in the advances of technology, and in the increase in the number of ways we have organized ourselves into bigger and bigger units and human groups. We fail to see where the lack of vitality is, because we are so busy and active, and the national attention has been distracted by the impulses of this time in American history. We have been distracted by the problems of national defense, the problems of building an economy strong enough to sustain us in the world. Our attention has been diverted into purely practical matters. As a result, there is a mistaken notion in the public mind that by gaining more and more military power, more and more economic power, we are also gaining more political and moral power. Such notions have distracted us from the key issues which have to do with the way the individual lives in his society.

On the other hand, there are elements of social and cultural crisis which are overt and have recently exploded into public view. We have known for these past 100 years that the education of the Negro has been a national scandal. This scandal has now exploded into public consciousness. It was further made public by the dignified and important representation of the rights of Negroes in the Washington demonstration of this past summer.

It is now clear that at least one-third of the entire popula-

tion of the United States is receiving a third-rate education, suited to a poor and backward society, rather than to the aims and ideals which we proclaim. It is also true that we have thousands of young people at this moment roaming the slum streets of our big cities, uneducated, unemployed, and unemployable, while the favored youth of the suburbs drift on a tide of affluence toward the twin ports of security and status. I can testify from my own observation that the general level of teaching in our colleges and universities is such that it bores the best of the students while the rest suffer from severe intellectual malnutrition.

Why are we in this situation? I have suggested one answer—that we have diverted our national attention toward the practical problems of military and industrial consequence. But how do we account for the lack of lusty social criticism of the kind we used to have in the 1930's? How do we account for the growth of so many new forms of political reaction? How do we account for the present tendency of citizens always to think in terms of how one can gain acceptance of one's opinions rather than how one can gain insight and truth, without regard to who agrees with it? This is the heart of the democratic mandate—the necessity of finding clear evidence for one's belief, presenting it in its wholeness and in its truth, then letting the chips fall where they may.

We can also say about contemporary America that we have let the events of our lives outrun our ability to keep up with them. The educational events are some of those in question. We waited until race riots rocked the South before we paid attention to the real fact that the situation of the Negro has for years been intolerable. We waited until the brink of war over Cuba before we realized that there was no safety for mankind until the world is disarmed. We have until recently been accepting the pollution of the atmosphere by atomic fallout as if it were a patriotic gesture to do so. We have

evidence from the reports of government agencies and from outside observers that we pollute our streams, we ruin our landscapes, we corrupt the atmosphere with smog, we create huge centers of ugliness in our major cities—all in the name of technological and economic progress. We now find ourselves justifying the Test Ban Treaty, not on the grounds that it will save the lives of future races, but on the grounds that it will keep us ahead of the Russians, because we are a whiz at testing underground. This does not seem to me to be a worthy motive for having a test-ban treaty.

We have within the democratic society a number of ways of reviving the culture in its personal aspects. We can look to the arts, to political discourse, to the involvement of citizens in politics, to the informed reader, to all the thousands and thousands of more people who can become members of an attentive public, watching public discourse, watching political action and concerned that this action move in a direction consonant with democratic values. By democratic values I mean the relationship between one human being and another, and the concern one must take for the rights, privileges, and interests of the other. These values are the basis for the particular way we govern ourselves. But the way we govern ourselves depends on something deeper. It depends on how we use the resources of the mind and social action to increase the citizen's sensitivity to the concerns of others. The ultimate democratic value is the ability, through the moral imagination, to enter into the lives of others, to know the other person's concerns.

It is natural, therefore, to consider our schools and colleges as the breeding grounds for these moral values and to consider how, through education, we can bring this attitude toward life to the fore. At the moment, the major tendencies in education are not moving in this direction. There is a tendency, as in the society at large, to think in terms of mechanics, to be obsessed with the technologies of education, to write and read reports on education which have to

do with the redistribution of academic credits and reshuffling of subjects. Rather than reforming education, faculty committees usually sit in discussion groups deciding how many credits of a foreign language to require, how the teacher should be accredited by the State, how many credits in science are appropriate for the young educated American. These are merely bookkeeping arrangements for education. They do not involve education itself. Indeed, it can be said that in the universities, where the vitality of individual thinking should be a major concern, faculty members are doing what Professor Dobie of the University of Texas once described as "digging up old bones and burying them in new graves"—that is to say, making a new curriculum.

The university system is at present a reflection of an attitude toward social change that has grown up in America, along with an attitude toward one's place within the system. A great deal of time and energy is spent by the American citizen in working his way through the social system, rather than trying to rebuild the system of values according to which he and his society can live. This attitude in education is simply the organizational side of a mass culture, as conceived in educational terms. It is our responsibility as citizens, as educators, and as persons, to work at the issues of education and of cultural and social change, at the point where we can see that changes are possible and necessary.

If we are to have a viable democracy in terms of the social changes necessary for Negro children in the educational system, we need certain specific pieces of research, careful thinking, careful rearrangement of our present methods and approaches, careful study of how best to educate teachers in order to deal with the problems of the Negroes and the minority groups across the country. That is a focal point where we should be putting our energies. That is where we should be spending our money.

What we must do, above all, is to look at the entire population of the country's children in terms of who they are and

where they are, and bring to each child that kind of education appropriate to his situation. It is useless to try to bring an academic program of an inappropriate sort to a young person who has grown up in the slums, has no idea what his teacher is talking about, and who, when tested on the standard intelligence test, suffers from such a paucity of vocabulary that he is unable to demonstrate the verbal skills which he must already have learned in order to be accepted as an intelligent child. We need education which does not classify the country's children, moving them upwards in the social system through the high school, into the college, and into the society, using education only as a means of screening out those who are unable to learn academic subjects.

I suggest that we go back to thinking about individual children at whatever stage of growth, at whatever stage of talent they may have reached, and develop those programs of education which can take them from where they are to the next stage. I suggest that we call a truce to this endless testing, testing, testing, pulling the flower up every five minutes to see if it is growing.

When we are thinking of developing a strong and exciting society, which is one way to describe an appropriate democratic culture, we need to remember that the most powerful elements within any big society in the modern world consist of those social and political ideas which, because of their worth, reach out to people and command attention, imagination, and assent. In the Soviet Union, for example, the thing which obviously worries the Soviet leaders just now is that a concern for individual freedom is showing itself through the crevices of the system itself. These concerns are expressed by the poets and the writers and the critics. Gagarin, Titov, and Valentina Tereshkova, the lady astronaut, are being celebrated as national heroes, but they are harmless to the Soviet system. The real people one needs to worry about are people like Pasternak and Yevtushenko who are saying to their people that man must concern himself with

individual human values, with the expansion of consciousness, the expansion of the range of private enquiry, and not with the submission to public values.

This is exactly the problem we have in this country. We have to think to ourselves: Who are those who create the images we then pursue? Do they come from an educational system which concentrates only on graduating people who may be useful to industry, or to professions, or to the military, or to the advance of technology, or to the prosperity of the country? These are certainly people we want to have, who are to be useful to the state. But the person we need to worry about is the same kind of person the Russians are worrying about, but for different reasons.

When we think of those who create the images which we and our children wish to emulate, we find that the person who called national attention to the effect of insecticides on public health and human survival was a scientist who was also a brilliant writer, Rachel Carson. The regular political process through which such faults are rectified did not begin to move until, with an eloquent style and with an informed moral attitude, Miss Carson set to work to explain this to her fellow-citizens. The one who has shown us most clearly in recent months what the Negro problem consists of is not the research specialist, not those who are talking politics about the Negro, but James Baldwin, through his novels, through his essays, and through the personal contribution of his speeches. The ones who have shown us what our lives have become in America are Arthur Miller, David Riesman, Edward Albee, Ben Shahn, Paul Tillich, Hannah Arendt. These are the men and women whose opinions move through the culture at an unconscious as well as a conscious level, and whose ideas begin to work within the culture itself. These are men and women who have been thinking deeply and personally about what life can be and should be, as against what life now is.

Until each of our children knows what it means to read

a poem because he loves poetry, instead of reading it to pass an examination—until we have the entire population of the American university and the American school anxious to learn because of the leap in imagination which this then makes possible, anxious to learn science because one can then penetrate the secrets of nature, anxious to work in psychology and literature and dance and theatre and all the arts in order to move farther into the world in an understanding of man in nature—until this is the goal of our educational system and of our cultural reforms, we are not going to have vitality in the culture itself.

Let me sum up simply by saying that it is time that we stopped urging ourselves to do more of the same things, to think of education, the organization of culture, the organization of ourselves, in terms of how efficient we can make the organization. The big university is efficient—it can turn out 25,000 students over a given period of time with the minimum of administrative effort, thereby creating a system to which the student learns to adapt. We cannot make huge organizations to run the national economy without thinking carefully about where the forces of the economy, when linked with the forces of the military, are taking the entire country.

We must rethink the nature of the values we wish to celebrate within the culture. We must decide what social changes we wish to make, not from expediency, but because they are changes which will improve the quality of life within the United States and will, therefore, make a higher form of contribution from America to world society. These are the questions to be raised in the relation of politics and social change to education. They are the questions which underlie the problem of infusing a mass society with the values of democracy.

PUBLIC OPINION AND PUBLIC POLICY

Peter H. Odegard

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The American people are alternately belabored for two besetting sins—on the one hand, for being ignorant, indifferent, and apathetic toward public affairs, and, on the other hand, for being too nosy, too inquisitive, and too much given to interfering in matters that ought better to be left to Congress, the President, and the bureaucrats who serve them. This latter is a far cry from Rousseau's notion that public opinion is the voice of God and the American historian George Bancroft's belief that the "decrees of the universal conscience (i.e., public opinion) are the nearest approach to the presence of God in the soul of man." To Alexander Hamilton, on the other hand, the public was a great beast that seldom determines right.

And other members of our Founding Fathers thought that the less the people had to do with government, the better. Indeed direct participation has gone so far that we sometimes forget that in only one place does the Constitution of the United States as conceived by the framers make any provision for direct participation by the people, and that was in the election of the House of Representatives. The Supreme Court was to be appointed by the President for life, the Senate was to be elected by State legislatures, the Electoral College to be chosen by State legislatures, and so on. Even in elections to the House of Representatives the qualifications of voters were to be determined by the States.

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But from 1789 to the present time there has been a progressive increase in the participation of the people in the Government. The 12th Amendment changed the way in which the electors were to vote, and now the Electoral College is little more than a rubber stamp for the direct election of the President. Another step in the direction of popular participation was the 17th Amendment, which required the direct election of United States Senators by the people. And there have been other changes in the same direction, such as the development of the direct primary system for nominating candidates, the development of the referendum in many states, and the increasing influence of organized pressure groups and public opinion in the decision-making process.

Walter Lippman writes, in *The Public Philosophy*, about a "functional derangement" in the United States between the mass of the people and the government. "The people," he says, "have acquired power which they are incapable of exercising, and the governments they elect have lost powers which they must recover if they are to govern."

Vital matters of public policy and administration, it is said, are determined not on the basis of research, discussion, and judgment as to what is best or in the public interest, but on the basis of guesses as to what the so-called public or public opinion wants or will endure. Representatives in state legislatures and in Congress, executive officers from Mayors to Presidents hang to the coattails of Gallup, Harris, or Roper polls of public opinion. The result, according to those who bemoan all this, is a "functional derangement" in which the people have power they are incapable of exercising and the government has lost power which it must recover if it is to govern.

Whatever you may think about the matter, the issue posed is an old one and one not easily resolved. It involves problems as fundamental as the meaning of government of the

people, by the people, and for the people. It involves also, as a corollary, the long-debated question of the proper relation between public decision makers and the public which presumably they serve.

Subsidiary to these basic questions are others like:

1. What is the meaning of an election? What kind of a mandate, if any, does an election impose or imply?
2. Are public policies merely the product of multiple cross-pressures exerted by professional lobbyists in the employ of organized special interest? Is politics, as Ambrose Bierce said it was, merely the strife of interests masquerading as principle?
3. When we say that the will of the majority must prevail, what majority are we talking about—the adult population, the qualified electors, organized pressure groups, the Democratic or Republican Party, a majority of Congress, or the Supreme Court? Are we talking about a concurrent majority of interest groups or States, or a numerical majority of people as citizens, voters, Congressmen, judges, or bureaucrats?
4. And what about the rights of minorities versus majorities and of individuals against groups and crowds and the state of the masses?
5. Finally, in our zeal to protect minorities from the tyranny of majorities, what about the tyranny of minorities that can and do defeat the majority will and produce what James Burns called a “Deadlock of Democracy?”

I can't begin to explore all facets of these questions. But let me pick up one or two of them. To begin with, let me say that, in my judgment, the American people, the public, or public opinion, against which so many critics direct their fire, is more sinned against by far than sinning.

Public opinion, as often as not, is a hobgoblin or a crutch used to excuse, support, or rationalize leadership or the lack

of it among legislators, executives, bureaucrats, and occasionally judges.

The "functional derangement" in American government and politics is not the intrusion of the people into the decision-making process. On the contrary, it is the abdication of leadership which uses public opinion as an excuse for its failure. And this is as true of TV executives, newspaper publishers, and even college presidents and professors as it is of congressmen, mayors, governors, presidents, and bureaucrats. For the fact is that public opinion is not a product of spontaneous generation but a product of leadership. Like the man who doesn't know what he thinks until he hear what he says, that mystic mass of undifferentiated humans called "the public" doesn't have an opinion on most public issues until the pollsters, politicians, columnists, or pundits tell it what to think. In all but the most exceptional cases the public is a spectator, not a participant, in the political dialogue.

John Q. Public, in fact, as every study shows, knows little or nothing and, for the most part, cares less, about the latest figures on the public debt, the balance of payments, the rise and fall of Dow Jones averages, or even the most recent bulletin from Saigon or Singapore—that is, unless his job, his investments, or some other vital interest impels him to pay attention to these affairs. Otherwise he remains ignorant, indifferent, apathetic until some leader to whom he looks for light—the President, his congressman, a pundit, or a pollster—tells him what to think.

Most of us, in fact, see the world in fragments. Only under the pressure of making a living, or discharging some other special responsibility, do we put the fragments together into meaningful forms or patterns. And the forms we perceive are limited to more or less narrow aspects of human knowledge and experience. Beyond these limits lies the twilight zone of vague and uncertain awareness, followed, as one moves out-

ward, by the deepening gloom of just plain ignorance, where shapeless monsters of imagined fears and fancies roam.

It is this aspect of human perception and behavior that makes the job of civic leadership and education so terribly difficult and so terribly important. Men and women caught up in the daily tasks of making a living, raising a family, and snatching from our jet-propelled time capsule a bit of fun and frolic, have little time or energy for public affairs. Although public affairs are almost by definition somebody else's affairs, they lack the intimacy and immediacy of other demands upon our time. We know they're important because they take our sons for the Army and our hard-earned money for taxes. But to make them meaningful, to put the scattered signals, cues, bits and pieces of information, rumor, and gossip together requires more time than most people can give. A good daily paper will carry 100,000 words about everything from a comic strip to news of cosmic exploration. Bothered and bewildered by all this, John Q. Public, if he is interested at all, looks for short cuts; and takes on the conclusions and clichés of others whose captive he thereupon becomes. Or he strives to anthropomorphize the news—looking for good guys and bad guys, capsules of some kind that can capture and contain the fugitive, booming, buzzing confusion of it all.

Public opinion, in this generalized sense, therefore, becomes a combination of ignorance and imagination, of myth and metaphor, of people on the sidelines, not in the center, of events. And the problems become more, not less, difficult as science and technology move from the outskirts to the center of public affairs. If, as the American Institute of Public Opinion discovered, 50 percent of a random sample did not know what a tariff is, what will they know about radioactive isotopes or a breeder reactor? The fault, if it be a fault, is not a lack of information or of media for its mass dissemination. The lack is in understanding, in some form

or structure to give meaning and significance to the avalanche of items that assail our eyes and ears in nearly every waking hour.

The major responsibility of both civic education and political leadership—and they are simply different sides of the same coin—is to give form and structure to a world that is otherwise mainly chaos and confusion. The job of leadership, in a word, is to replace ignorance and indifference with information and concern, to transform information into knowledge, and concern into participation, so that knowledge may lead to good judgment and even wisdom. This responsibility for civic education is not merely one aspect of government and political leadership; it is pretty nearly the heart and center of it. Information programs are therefore not something to be left to broken-down bureaucrats, junior civil servants, or TV and newswriters unable to make the grade in commerce. It should have the highest priority and the best talent.

A second and more special part of the problem is to recognize, as I have said elsewhere, that the “effective market” for civic information is highly selective. Real or fancied interest—whether economic, religious, social, or otherwise—can be a powerful ally in reaching the various special publics of which the general public is composed. It’s not too difficult to interest farmers in the farm problem, teachers and even students in public education, Negroes in civil rights, taxpayers in taxes, and so on through a thousand discernible interests. It is through these that information and concern can be communicated and transformed into knowledge and participation. That part of the job isn’t easy, but it can and, in a measure, is being done. More difficult is the job of making special interests compatible with the public interest. A farmer who says “what’s good for agriculture is good for the country” has already taken a long step toward understanding his civic responsibility. No self-respecting citizen is likely

to believe that his business, trade, or profession is *not* good for the country. Getting him to think about it is half the battle. The task of political leadership is then to show on what terms his own interest and the public interest coincide. And this cannot be done by political leaders or bureaucrats who themselves are blind to or unconscious of the problem. If the public interest is to be more than an oblong blurr, it must be sought after, which brings us to the relation of political leaders to these various publics and the public interest they are honor-bound to serve. And that is a vast topic in itself, not to be explored at this time but merely hinted at.

Legislators, executives, and bureaucrats are not robots or puppets responding only to pressures from the folks back home. Those pressures are invariably highly specialized and are by no means identical with the welfare of the district, State, or Nation. The decision-maker's image of his constituents and their image of him may be both the cause and the effect of the specialized interests he hears and sees and consults. He needs to be aware of this. And he has a responsibility that transcends any one or even all of them—a responsibility to search out those policies that, upon the basis of the best knowledge he can command, will most effectively contribute to the basic values of the society he serves. If these values be liberty, welfare, and equality, or—if he is more conservatively inclined—order, property, and status, he will betray his own conscience and his calling as a political leader if he fails to vote to conserve and to promote them.

A public servant, congressman or commissioner, mayor or President, is no mere delegate, no narrowly bound agent waiting always and forever to hear from home before he votes. His responsibility is, rather, that of a trustee bound by oath to vote as he believes his constituents would themselves vote if they had his knowledge and his responsibility and his dedication to the basic values of their common community and country. If through time he cannot persuade

them that his cause is or would be their cause, too, they then can replace him with another. That essentially is what elections are for.

In his famous address to the Electors of Bristol, Edmund Burke in 1774 outlined what many still regard as the appropriate relations between a representative and his constituents.

“It ought,” he said, “to be the happiness and glory of a representative to live in the strictest union . . . and the most unreserved communication with his constituents. Their wishes ought to have great weight with him, their opinions high respect; their business his unremitting attention. But his unbiased opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience he ought not to sacrifice to . . . any man or to any set of men living . . . government and legislation are matters of reason and judgment and not (merely) inclination. . . . To deliver an opinion is the right of all men (and) (the opinion) of constituents is a weighty and respectable opinion which a representative ought always to rejoice to hear. . . . But authoritative instructions, mandates issued which the member is bound blindly and implicitly to obey . . . are things utterly unknown to the laws of this land. . . .

Parliament is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests: which interests each must maintain as an agent and advocate. . . .

But Parliament is a deliberative assembly of one nation with one interest, that of the whole—where not local purposes, not local prejudices, ought to guide, but the general good resulting from the general reason of the whole. . . .”

Can one better express the proper relation between a representative and his constituents, whether he be a city councilman, State legislator, member of Congress, or President of the United States? Government is no place for timid little men forever holding back, afraid to face issues or make decisions lest they offend “public opinion.” Life, least of all

public life, is not an everlasting seminar. Nor should it be a Sargasso Sea where public policies perish for lack of direction and decision.

To Burke's sage advice one final injunction might be added, namely, the responsibility of every political leader to share in the *continuous education* of his constituents.

One measure of his stature is his capacity to communicate not only the knowledge upon which his decisions rest but the principles and values from which the policies for which he stands derive their meaning and significance.

One thinks in this connection of Jefferson and Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. No small part of their eminence as statesmen came from their contribution to the civic education of the people, to their willingness to lead and not merely to linger in the lobbies waiting, Macawber-like, for "something to turn up."

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